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Reserve

NORTH CAROLINA



COOPERATIVE CROP REPORTING SERVICE

QUESTIONS ANSWERED HEREIN

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RALEIGH, N. C.

MARCH 1, 1949

NORTH CAROLINA IS WITHOUT YEARLY COUNTY FARM FACTS FOR FIRST TIME SINCE WORLD WAR I.

THIS IS A SPECIAL ISSUE

The information in this issue is based on about 30 Chamber of Commerce conferences held early in 1949 in as many counties throughout North Carolina. The Secretaries of each participating Chamber of Commerce invited leaders of different professions and occupations known to be interested in their local agricultural welfare. Those concerned with the tax problems of the county were also invited, since it has been through their machinery that the annual census has been possible. Thus, the conferences were representative and discussion proceeded with a minimum of prejudice and a maximum of constructive community needs.

These varied interests made it possible to analyze the many uses to which the annual farm data had been put. It was then concluded that the ANNUAL census provided far better and more useful working material than had been realized. It was further agreed that the losses of these data would be heavily felt soon and in uncertain years ahead. In conclusion, it was agreed that local conferences should be promptly held, so that action might be taken towards the restoration of the annual farm census, in a manner optional with the county commissioners.

The State USDA Council on January 21, 1949, acting on the resolutions (reprinted herein) drawn up by a special committee appointed December 17, 1948, agreed unanimously on the needed reinstatement of the annual farm census. It further passed a resolution requesting county USDA Councils to organize special meetings for the discussion of and formulation of proper local action on this matter.

ANNUAL FARM INFORMATION APPROVED

All interests in the state are desirous of renewing and having available annual county farm facts. This extends far beyond the field of agriculture into business, industry, education and other fields of economic endeavor. The demands and needs for more detailed farm statistics have become increasingly apparent since World War II, particularly so at the beginning of the 1949 crop-year when specific production problems for some major crops were being focused to the attention of Government in the interest of farmers and the national economy.

ALL INTERESTS FOR RURAL-URBAN WELFARE

In as many counties, thirty all-agencies conferences have been held this year in order to determine the need for annual county farm statistics. Most of these conferences were held under the auspices of local Chambers of Commerce. The renewal of an annual census of agriculture for this state met with general approval. Representative interests recognized the local values realized from adequate, timely county agricultural data.

THE COMPLEX BUSINESS OF FARMING

Agriculture is showing growing complexities which require ever increasing and more dependable current working facts. County statistics are the foundation for better agricultural planning and improvement of rural-urban relationships. They put business into agriculture and are related to it in much the same way as workable accounting systems are to the successful operations of business organizations.

A TIME AND PLACE FOR EVERYTHING

It was generally agreed by representatives at all conferences that the time of tax listing provided the best all-around medium for collecting annual farm data. The principal points in support of this were (1) centralization of task and saving of time when worked in conjunction with an already established function of the county government, (2) provides the most economical method of obtaining such information.

Expanding on the first point mentioned, it was unanimously agreed that at no other time could farmers be as easily and conveniently contacted for the purpose of obtaining an agricultural census as when they are called upon for their regular annual tax listing. This results in both a saving of time and expense of the part of farmers as well as the county government when considering any other method.

With respect to the second point, the alternative method of getting census coverage through a direct enumerative survey would be far too expensive for consideration.

HOW FARM CENSUS RESULTS ARE USED

A great many persons are concerned with how the farm census information has been used. Due in part to the very nature of the data, many of the uses are indirect and cannot be evaluated. However, some of the concrete usages to which the data are put follow:

1. They provide a year by year record of county land uses, crop acreages and livestock numbers.
2. They become an official and individually confidential record lodged with the state for all farmers reporting. Most farmers have not been aware of this fact, but where known, individual farmers have used the recorded data to their advantage for establishing base acreages for their crop allotments.
3. They are used as the basis for official county estimates of crops and livestock, and as such become the primary guide for establishing equitable county allotments for crops under quotas.
4. They provide the local and central agencies concerned with the administration of agricultural programs with annual check data in order that they

(Continued on Page 2)

HOW FARM CENSUS RESULTS ARE USED (continued)

- might determine whether the desired purposes of programs in effect are being accomplished.
5. They were used during the war to equitably and advantageously reestablish farm machinery and gasoline allocations at a higher level in North Carolina.
 6. County facts are essential and basic to the promotion of county objectives such as advertising, attracting new businesses, developing educational folders, for program planning, etc.

RESOLUTION

Passed by State USDA Council, Raleigh, N. C. January 21, 1949.

WHEREAS, the county farm census, which has furnished annual farm statistics for thirty years, was discontinued by the 1947 North Carolina State Legislature, and

WHEREAS, county, state, and federal agricultural agencies, all of which are represented on this Council, have used to advantage and will continue to need such yearly county agricultural facts, and

WHEREAS, commercial, industrial, and professional interests throughout the state have used and are increasingly requesting this information each year, and

WHEREAS, this farm information is already being requested by the public but will not be available after the crop year 1947, and

WHEREAS, in the administration of all acreage allotment and control programs, North Carolina counties and the State have been able to justify and obtain their full share of such acreage and allotment, because of facts and information obtained from local sources through the annual farm census, and

WHEREAS, no federal agricultural county service agency is permitted to be responsible for any state or county act or to deviate from its Congressionally prescribed duties, and

WHEREAS, the State Department of Agriculture is officially responsible for collecting and furnishing agricultural facts, and

WHEREAS, the State Department of Agriculture has no county representative in the various counties of the State, and

WHEREAS, there is great need to inform local offices and interests of the need for and the value and benefit from uses made of information gathered through its farm census,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the North Carolina USDA Council recommend that the annual farm census be re-established, and further recommend and request that the 1948 General Assembly do enact adequate ways and means of re-instituting this farm census on an annual basis.

(Signed by the 13 members of the State USDA Council)

"1. At the January 21 meeting of the State USDA Council, a committee appointed at the December 17 meeting made a report on the matter of reinstating the annual farm census discontinued by the 1947 General Assembly. The State Council agreed unanimously that the annual farm census should be reinstated and passed a resolution which was signed by all members present, giving reasons why the farm census should be continued.

"The Council also passed a resolution to request County USDA Councils to ask for a meeting with the County Commissioners or their representatives and other local interests at the earliest date possible to inform them of the Council's interest in the annual farm census. The farm census is very helpful to the different agricultural agencies in many ways and County Councils should so inform the commissioners and other interested parties."

AN ANNUAL CENSUS PAYS OFF

The 1943-44 war production goals for agricultural crops and livestock for North Carolina were at levels demanding of the farmers a maximum of effort. Allocations of gasoline for farm operations were first made on the basis of the trend in numbers of tractors on farms as indicated from the U. S. Census for the years 1920-25-30 and 1940. In 1944 it had become apparent that the gasoline allocated for farm operations was far short of needs in order to meet production goals. Many farmers expressed this fact directly to the executive office of the State. Shortly thereafter, Mr. W. Z. Betts, head of the State Division of Purchases and Contracts, was directed by the Governor to review this problem in search of a solution. It was then that the USDA Council was called in.

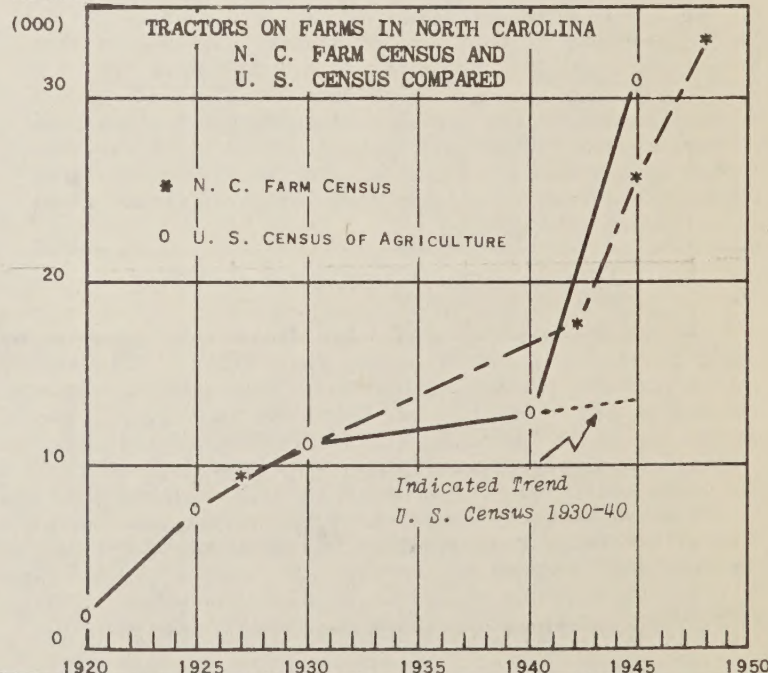
The chart below graphically presents the facts that were used by the Council and brings out clearly the value of CURRENT agricultural statistics. Since the N. C. Farm Census was then taken annually, it was possible to get current data on numbers of tractors on North Carolina farms, and have these facts available almost two years ahead of similar data from the U. S. Census even though it was taken as of the same date.

The N. C. Farm Census of January 1, 1945, showed an increase of 101 percent from the 1940 U. S. Census numbers of tractors on farms in North Carolina. This was well substantiated by the 1945 U. S. Census data which became available in 1947.

On the basis of the increase indicated by the N. C. Farm Census, the farm gasoline allocation for the State was increased from less than 6,000,000 gallons to almost 15,000,000 gallons. Measured in dollar benefits, this single incident is indisputable evidence of the high value that should be placed on a system whereby current agricultural facts can be made readily available.

The crop acreage information made available through the annual N. C. Farm Census also added weight to and substantiated the justification for the farm gasoline needs.

TRACTORS



YEAR	1942	1945	1948	1/ As of April 1, all other data as of January 1.
N. C. CENSUS	17,620	25,626	33,656	
U. S. CENSUS	-	31,189	-	

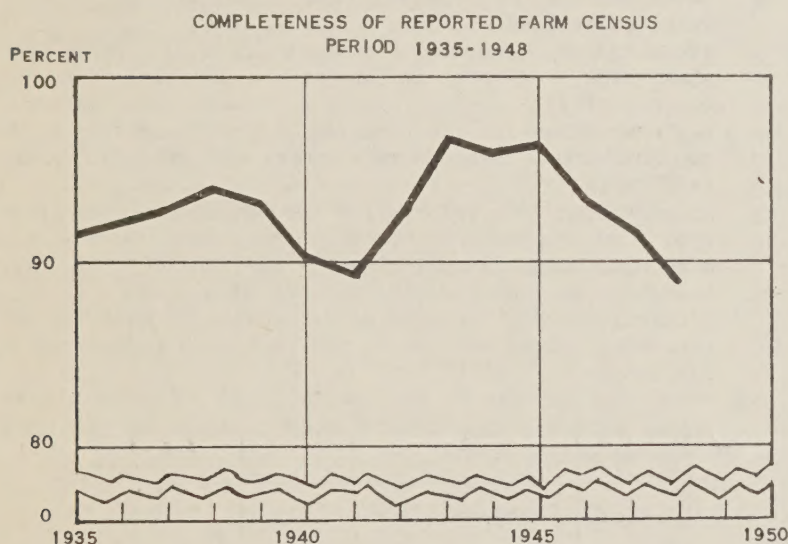
INVENTORIAL THINKING - AN INTANGIBLE VALUE

One of the most intangible values realized from the Farm Census has been that derived from the inventorial review of each year's farming activities on the part of each farmer when he prepares for making his annual census report. This is strongly brought out through many related incidents where farmers have carefully prepared on cards or rough sheets of paper that information relative to their farm which they had become accustomed to reporting at their annual census listing.

Participation in this yearly practice has trained farmers in the value of inventorial reporting and has made them aware of the importance of comparing their individual operations with the county and the state trends. This has aided greatly in the promotion and appreciation of agricultural programs at the county and community level. However, this is true largely of those farmers who think constructively of the census work.

STEADY IMPROVEMENT UNTIL 1945

Based on available long-time statistical records, North Carolina's farm census achieved its greatest degree of completeness from 1943 to 1945, when well over 90 percent completeness was reported. This has meant that the coverage of farms has been sufficiently large that statistical methods could be developed and applied to the reported data to adjust for incompleteness and expand to dependable 100 percent levels even by townships. The completeness of the reported Farm Census for the State as a whole is graphically presented below.



RESEARCH HAS PROVED THE NEEDS

Research has shown that it is almost impossible to arrive at reliable county figures through the small sample method. For that reason the reported "raw data" must cover a large percentage of the farms within a county. This especially applies to township studies.

A FRIENDLY ATTITUDE IS IMPORTANT

A friendly attitude on the part of the listers tends to win the reporter's cooperation, resulting in easier response and better information. This applies equally as well to tax listing.

EDUCATION THE ESSENTIAL NEED

Some of the primary problems that must be overcome in the development of an annual voluntary census are those of educating the farmers and others directly responsible for obtaining the reports as to the value of the census, its strict confidential nature, and the fact that it has no relationship to taxation. Since reports for such a survey are based on the voluntary, free-will response of farmers, their cooperation is directly related to their knowledge of the reasons for the questions asked and the manner in which questions are put to them by those asking for it.

DOES NOT AFFECT TAXES

The farm census has largely been accepted by most farmers as not affecting taxes. Several counties have in recent years made a step forward in removing this by setting up special township enumerators for the farm census. These special enumerators work in conjunction with the regular tax listers. This method has been advocated by many tax supervisors and is well founded.

When a dual setup is used, the farm census enumerator can then devote his whole thinking to the census and develop for himself the best methods of getting the cooperation and response of farmers. This in turn improves the farmer-lister relationship and opens the way for good response when the farmer has been assured that the information is confidential and not at all related to taxation.

COUNTIES FAVOR DUAL SYSTEMS

Henderson County is one of several counties that have used the individual township farm census enumerator plan for many years. Officials have expressed the opinion that results from this method have proven to be exceptionally good. Although slightly more costly, they are certain that this is offset by more complete reports and improved relationships between farmers and both the tax and census listers.

In Gaston County the dual method of listing has been used for sometime. A force behind this has been the expressed concern of business interests and industries in that they recognized the advantages and essential values that can be derived from annual farm inventorial data regarding their own programs.

NO OTHER MEDIUM AVAILABLE

One point that should be strongly emphasized is that no other agencies of the federal government are currently authorized or permitted, or can any be adequately and economically set up to obtain an annual county farm census. Existing agencies will attest this fact.

LILENTAL (TVA - AEC) FEBRUARY 6, 1949

"Our democracy is founded upon (a faith in the judgment of the people as a whole) a belief that when the people are informed - honestly and clearly informed - their conscience and their common sense can be relied upon to carry us safely through any crisis."

The misunderstandings by county leaders rests exactly here. They have been informed only partially, erroneously and with strong bias. Those who might speak with authority and conviction have been too busy using the information, and not accustomed to political conflicts. Along with overlooking the real educational and economic purposes and needs, agricultural leaders are letting an essential source of potential information slip, without doing anything about it.

Some agricultural leaders are still requesting current county farm facts. Although told previously, they have not grasped the full meaning of this loss.

FARM REPORT

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MARCH 1949

FARM CENSUS

NEED FOR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AGAIN STRESSED

A point strongly emphasized at many of the all-agencies conferences was expressed in the need for educational efforts at local levels directed towards revealing to farmers, businessmen and other civic interests the rewards gained from an annual census of agriculture. It was agreed that this would result in the binding of farmers and county officials in a strong, cooperative program of securing annual farm data.

It was further agreed that a beneficial educational program could be accomplished best through the efforts of local interests. Some of the educational steps suggested were:

1. Local agricultural agencies should always credit the farmers, with whom they are constantly working in the daily administration of agricultural programs, for the local farm facts made available through an annual census. Failure to do this in the past has been one reason for the erroneous belief that the census facts are collected by other agencies--they use them, quote them but give no credit to their origin.
2. High school agricultural classes provide an excellent cornerstone for educating farm youth in the values of current local agricultural facts. When county agricultural facts are used, students should be clearly instructed as to the method through which these facts are obtained.
3. Where advantages have accrued to civic and business interests through the use of county farm data, the value of such data should be strongly expressed by them to farmers, farm organizations and agricultural agencies of the government.
4. Knowing the public needs for current farm facts, county public officials should adequately advertise the taking of the annual census, as a needful foundation for local usages and benefits.

FARM CENSUS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTIONS:

1. How long did the annual farm census last?
2. Why was the farm census changed by the Legislature?
3. Under the County Commissioners, who listed the farm census?
4. Why are County Farm Census Supervisors recommended?
5. Why are township farm census listers recommended?
6. How are county crop quotas related to the farm census?
7. Why do urban interests need the farm census?
8. Wherein do the farmers benefit from the farm census?

9. Why do county agricultural leaders depend upon it?
10. Why should the county provide the means for listing it?

ANSWERS:

1. From 1918 to 1948 -- 31 years.
2. Because a few tax officials demanded its divorcement.
3. The township tax listers in most instances.
4. Makes possible better promotion of the census work--centralizes responsibility.
5. Develops better farmer-lister relationships -- more interest created.
6. It is the only source of current official county farm statistics -- assures an equitable allocation of quotas to respective counties, and even to individual farmers.
7. Business expansion and planning in a predominantly agricultural state depends on current and reliable local farm facts.
8. By providing farm information for use in government program planning and for business interests, farmers become both directly and indirectly the final benefactors.
9. Leaders need timely factual guides with respect to agriculture within their counties in order to plan for and recommend needed changes in the agricultural program in the county.
10. Primarily for use at the county level -- as an aid to local agricultural interests, the benefits realized directly or indirectly pertain to the county.

CONFERENCES REPRESENTED BY MANY INTERESTS

Credit for the conferences referred to herein goes to the Chambers of Commerce in each county where these conferences were held. Through their untiring efforts for the betterment of local welfare, these round-table discussions were made possible. Their desire to objectively discuss and analyze the local values accrued from an annual farm census is clearly shown by the many local interests invited to attend these conferences. Representative interests invited were:

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION (CO. AGENT)	VO. AGR. TEACHER
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS	FARMERS HOME ADM.
PRODUCTION AND MARKETING (AAA)	PRODUCTION CREDIT
TAX SUPERVISORS	LEADING GENERAL FARMERS
SOIL CONSERVATIONIST	COUNTY ATTORNEY
TAX LISTERS	GEN'L. SUPPLY MERCHANT
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS	VETERINARIAN
CHAIRMAN, AG. COM., CHAM. OF COM.	FERTILIZER MANUFACTURER
BANKER	LIVESTOCK FARMER
FARM IMPLEMENT DEALER	RURAL ELECTRIFICATION